

How to Prepare for the World of PR as a College Student



(Pexels, 2020) As spring commencement quickly approaches, PR students anxiously search for employment opportunities.

Commencement is approaching quickly, and PR students across the United States are scrambling to sort out their plans after getting that diploma. Suddenly they feel as if they have spent the last four years of their college careers procrastinating for the day that has finally come.

Post-graduation anxiety is an obstacle every college student faces in their junior or senior years of school. Many students fear that they are not prepared or qualified enough to enter the professional world.

Other students feel a lack of support after graduation because they find it difficult to navigate the new terrain of employment when they do not have mentors to guide them through every step. Uncertainty of the future is inevitable, but it is not something to necessarily be afraid of. Of course, preparing ahead during college is an effective way prospective graduates can feel more at ease with their career's potential.

Here's where to start.

Invest in yourself

It is naive for students to rely on their school's name and reputation for landing jobs. Employers will hire people based on their demonstration of certain skills and what they can actually bring to the table. "Each semester", says BYU professor Robert Walz, "I have my students attend a 3-week Adobe Premiere workshop to learn editing skills that will teach them to use the program effectively." Actively working to enhance your PR toolbox will give you a leg up in applying for job positions. Outlets like Adobe, LinkedIn, and Microsoft offer thousands of workshops and certifications to complete that will make your job applications stand out.

Having confidence in yourself is essential to setting yourself up for success. According to a survey conducted by Cengage in 2021, a publisher and education-technology company, about 50% of new college graduates said they decided not to apply to entry-level positions because they felt they were not

qualified. Individuals may meet all criteria a company claims to want, but they could still be a great fit for the job.

Take Initiative

It is critical to be proactive in seeking opportunities to learn and network. Take advantage of the resources that your university offers. Getting involved in different clubs and workshops is a great initiative to take. Working closely with university faculty and advisors is also a great way to build connections and broaden opportunities in the field. professors. With many connections within their network including current and former colleagues or students, they can provide valuable advice and mentorship that could greatly impact a student's future career.

PRSSA provides many academic programs, scholarships, and mentorship opportunities that prepare students for the field of communications. According to PR professional, Landis Tindell, staying connected with the organization during and after their college career enables students to widen their professional network, helping launch their careers following graduation. He strongly encourages students to transfer their membership over to PRSA to obtain access to the PRSA Job Center and stay connected with other members and professionals.

Stay Relevant

Staying on top of new technology, trends, and communication strategies is absolutely necessary to remain engaged in the world of PR. Taking advantage of social media platforms is one of the best ways to stay relevant. Being active on LinkedIn is handy because it enables students to join and even initiate important conversations with future employers and companies. Doing research and soaking in new content sparks opportunities for new ideas.

Another way to stay in the loop is to frequently read well-known PR publications and journals, such as PR Weekly, PR Daily, and PR Newswire. These are just some of the popular, comprehensive resources that the PR community digest and apply to their skills and strategies. "Clients typically expect their PR professionals to be knowledgeable and well-informed about the latest trends and technologies," explains Robert Walz. "The media landscape is constantly evolving, and new platforms are emerging regularly." It is important to continuously look for ways to improve your skills and knowledge of evolving PR trends, especially as a student.

Conclusion

College is the time to prepare for your career and success as a future PR professional. By taking proactive steps to gain knowledge, skills, and experience in communications, you can improve your chances of landing a job in your desired career path. With this, you will feel more sure in your abilities and reduce the stress that often comes with transitioning from college to the workforce. Taking advantage of your college years will enable you to stay ahead of the curve, stand out to potential employers, and take the world of PR by storm. Live in the present so that you can succeed in the future.

Author Bio

Kira Hoggan is a rising senior at Brigham Young University studying Public Relations and Digital Humanities. She aspires to build a career in digital marketing in which she can represent organizations that align with her values and ethics. Kira enjoys attending live concerts and spending time outdoors to hike, ski, and swim.